

## HEREFORDSHIRE & MID-WALES SECTION NEWSLETTER



.....Issue 55 – DECEMBER 2020.....  
Editor Geoff McGladdery

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

All planned events listed here are expected to take place, but there is absolutely no guarantee that they will. Therefore the dates are for planning purposes only. We will continue to update the calendar, based firmly on government guidelines at the time and any supplementary advice from the VMCC. You can be assured that the health and welfare of section members will be our only priority.

### PAST EVENTS

#### Wednesday, 25th November 2020 - 12:30 - H&H Live on-line auction

Only 6 VMCC eligible machines made it to the block and results were mixed. The lovely, highly original, one owner Heinkel "Tourist", featured in issue 54-2, made £2,900 on the hammer – close to its top estimate. When commission and VAT (on the commission) are added, it will cost its new owner £3,335. A cheap piece of history or an expensive old motorbike? "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." The handsome Rickman-Honda CB750 K, featured in issue 54-1, stalled at £8,000 and was therefore sold as "Provisional". Beautifully screwed together with all the right high-performance "bits", this bike had never even turned a wheel.

Top price of the day - £16,675 - was paid for a tidy 1954 Vincent Comet Series C. Said to be in good running order, it wasn't 100% original, but did have its original carburettor. Confusingly described in the catalogue as both 1951 and 1954, it will still look great, wherever it is seen and ridden.



To view the results, follow this link .  
<https://www.handh.co.uk/auction/search/?au=492>

### FUTURE EVENTS

Monday 7th December 10:00 am - Thursday 10th December at 7:00 pm – 6<sup>th</sup> Timed Online Auction of Classic Cars & Motorcycles.

Just a handful of machines in this one, but they do include this 1926 550 cc Ariel Model "A". Said to be running "sweetly" it comes with some history and a V5C.



Banbury eligible, this could be a relatively easy way to add a pre-1930 bike to your collection, with most of the hard work already done. The only downside is

the optimistic guide price of £8,250 - £10,250. If you managed to get it at the lower estimate, you would be paying close to £9,500 with comission & VAT. You can find similar bikes in similar condition for 10% - 15% less. To see the whole catalogue by following this link <https://www.brightwellslive.com/lot/details/498861>

**Friday & Sat 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Dec. - Bonhams "Winter" Sale including The National Motorcycle Museum Reserve Collection - Bicester Heritage (The Rescheduled Autumn Sale)**

We've already taken a peek at this excellent sale in issues 54-1 and 54-2, and, by choice, avoided the elephant in the room – it's rammed full of Broughs and "V" twin Vincents. Over-priced, over-weight and overrated? Probably all of the above, but if you gave me one, I would keep it! I would polish it, worship it and bore all of my friends with it. I would exude smugness from every pore.



If you've decide to fund the purchase by selling some vital organs, you might as well blow it all on this immaculate 1936 Brough Superior 982cc SS100, part of the National Motorcycle Museum's "Reserve collection". Featuring the special OHV engine built by AMC exclusively for Brough, every SS100 left the

factory with a written guarantee that it had been timed at over 100mph for a quarter of a mile. Offred with its works record card, plenty of interesting history and rock solid provenance, it is guided at a mere £ 240,000 - £280,000.



At the opposite end of the Brogh spectrum, the sale of a vital organ may just about fund the purchase and restoration of this 1937 1,096CC Special. Described as a "project" and having had just 1 owner in the last 60 years, this side-valve survivor has plenty of history and is guided at a modest £32,000 - £42,000. Don't allow yourself to forget the little matter of Bonham's commission and the inland Revenue's 20% VAT on that commission, giving the buyer an 18% on-cost. This would add a mere £5,760 to your bill if you were luicky enough to get it at the lower estimate.

**IS THE MARKET SOFTENING ?**

You would think these are very difficult times for classic bike sellers, but rather like the US Stock market, there seems to be little sign of the market slackening.

Perhaps the appearance in this sale of no less than nine "V" twin Vincents and five 500cc singles might test the market's resolve. How strong is the Vincent market and how desperate are the sellers. The only way to find out is to register as a bidder by following this lnk.

[https://www.bonhams.com/auctions/26118/#/!](https://www.bonhams.com/auctions/26118/#/)

**Thursday Dec 15<sup>th</sup> (re-arranged from Nov 19<sup>th</sup>) – Section AGM and election of officers. 7:30 p.m.**

This will be a "Zoom" meeting open only to current VMCC members living in our Section's postcode areas. Agendas will be posted at least 1 week before the meeting.

**Saturday, 19th December 2020 H&H Motorcycle auction - National Motorcycle Museum, Coventry Road, Bickenhill, Solihull, B92 0EJ commencing 12:00**

If you were impressed by the exploits of Sebastian Nachtmann in the 1961 ISDT (see issue 54-2), you too could live the dream with this rare '77 twin shock BMW R100 HPN.



Strictly for heros, these machines were built by the factory for competition and were the basis for their legendary Paris Dakkar models. The HPN tag stands for Halbfeld, Pepperl and Neher. The first two being the engineers who developed BMW's "works" Paris Dakkar thoroughbreds and were totally responsible for the very special 1043cc engines. Guided at a lowly £4,000 - £6,000, this could be the bargain of the century.

Thirty machines – part of the National Motorcycle Museum's sell-off, now referred to as the "duplicate collection" – are included in H&H's excellent 175 lot catalogue. Yes there are enough Brough's and

Vincents to empty the wallets of even the richest collector, but there are also some excellent machines for mere mortals like ourselves. One of 2 ex-military Triumphs in the sale, this unusual 1944 3HW 350cc OHV single looks like it would be very satisfying to own. It oozes capability and functionality and is not without a little charisma too. A guide price of £5,000 - £7,000 doesn't seem out of place for a bike of this quality and rarity.



You can find the full catalogue by following this link. <https://www.handh.co.uk/auction/details/192-national-motorcycle-museum/?au=485>

**Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> December – The Brass Monkey Ride – The Moon at Mordiford - HR1 4LW – 11:00 a.m. start.**



We are determined to see this event happen this year, whilst still observing whatever Government's guidelines are in force at the time. If it is not possible to use the Moon, we will find alternative parking in the vicinity.

Mike Bertenshaw, Chris Lawton-Smith and Roger Bibbings have been working on a new route which will avoid the "grittier" sections of previous years.

### UNDER £1000

**Another in our series which finds useable bikes, ready to run, with MOTs (where required) for less than £1,000 and all VMCC eligible (made before Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 1995)**

Advertised for £700 on Facebook Market place, this rather down at heel 1986 125cc MZ comes with an MOT and apparently low mileage. A careful look at the MOT advisories and the full suite of pictures would suggest that they were 7,000 very hard miles! Not quite sure what happened to the standard comfy MZ seat! Remember that you can bargain with the seller on Facebook Market Place, so you could well pick up a cheap winter hack.



In sharp contrast, this 1982 Yamaha XJ600 seems to be in excellent condition. Advertised at £950, with an MOT until April, it wears its 36k miles well and should be good for twice that. These simple 8 valve OHC air cooled fours deliver 51 BHP through a 6 speed box and will eventually hit 115 mph. Described in a Motor Cycle News review as "built to endure rather than impress," and "Renowned for

being mechanically bullet and idiot proof", they sound like my kind of bike.



**NB - Prices are the advertised asking prices or actual selling prices and are correct at the time of writing. We have not verified any of the details vendors have used in their advertising – that must be your responsibility**



**THE BIRD'S NEST TOOL**



If you're making your own control cables, it is vital that you ensure that the inner cable cannot slip

through the nipple. It is not sufficient to use the solder as a glue, there must be some kind of physical restraint. A "Bird's Nest" is the only real answer and a "Bird's Nest" tool, like the one available from Venhill is the safest and surest way of making a sound and safe cable.

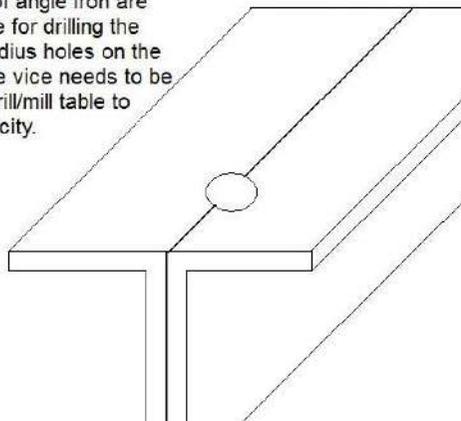


This short video clip shows how to use the Venhill tool. [https://youtu.be/g\\_273vflLa8](https://youtu.be/g_273vflLa8) The only drawback is the price. You can expect to pay somewhere between £100 & £115.

Section member John Munday, decided to make his own. Here is how he did it.

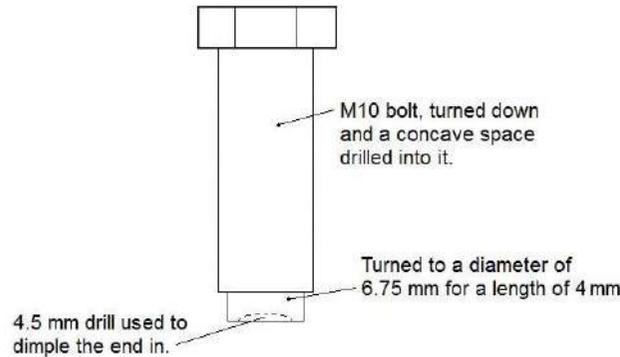
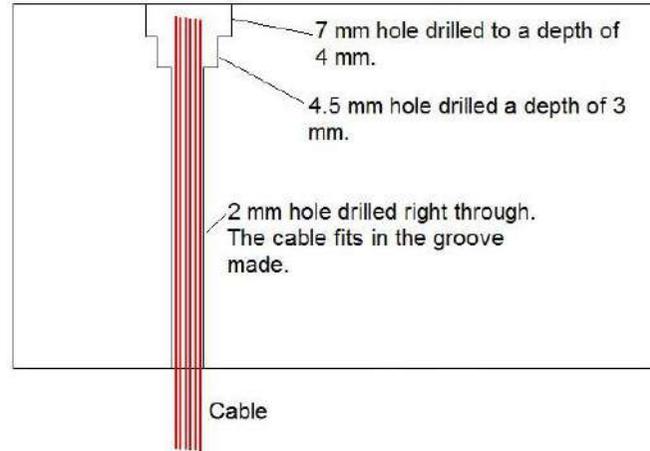
"To make my bird's nest tool I used two short lengths of 1" angle iron. I clamped them together and drilled them as shown in the drawing.

The two pieces of angle iron are clamped in a vice for drilling the three different radius holes on the same centre. The vice needs to be clamped to the drill/mill table to ensure concentricity.



The dimensions given are for the larger of the cable

sizes I use. For throttle cables I drilled a 1.5 mm hole right through, then 5 and 3 mm holes for the cage former. For the smaller cable I used an M6 bolt turned down to 4.75 mm.



In use the cable is positioned in one side of the tool

and then the other side put in place and the tool is clamped in the vice.

The bolt is positioned over the cable end in the tool and tapped down with a hammer to form the nest in the cup and the bolt dimple.

The tool I made is getting a bit battered but still works. I shall probably make a MKII version this winter.

### WHAT'S NEXT FOR PRESTEIGNE'S FINEST?

In an ironic twist of fate, Chaz Davies has been signed by the "Go Eleven" Ducati World Superbike team, replacing Michael Ruben Rinaldi, who took Chaz's place in the official Ducati works team - "aruba.it". Chaz seems delighted with the opportunity to ride a strong bike in a strong team "I'm very happy to join forces with Go Eleven! I think it's a great opportunity next year for myself and the Go Eleven Team to continue our progression. I had a great end to the 2020 season, winning the last race at Estoril and scoring the most points in the last nine races."



If Chaz can get the bike set up to his liking, he will be one of the few riders capable of undermining the

dominance of 7 times World Champion Jonathan Rea and his seemingly invincible Kawasaki.

## TT 2021

As we predicted in issue 54-2, the Grandstands will remain empty for a second year as IOM Enterprise Minister, Laurence Skelly, announced the cancellation of the 2021 TT, due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. An announcement over the running of the Classic TT races and Manx Grand Prix, which are scheduled to go ahead between 21 August and 3 September, will be made by the end of March.



Provisional dates for TT 2022 have been released, with practice week commencing Saturday 28th May and the first race, the Superbike, being flagged off on Saturday 4th June.

"Ferry passengers will have the option to transfer their bookings to 2022 or apply for a full refund", a spokesman for the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company said.

Despite bringing an estimated £30 million to the Island's economy, the races are increasingly viewed as a mixed blessing by residents. Will a 2 year gap be difficult to bridge and will riders and spectators still have the same appetite? Only time will tell.

## THE FIRST DRACULA RALLY OF TRANSYLVANIA

We are indebted to Paul Jameson for this article on his fascinating journey through Europe to the "Dracula" Rally in Romania. It has appeared previously in the Ariel Owners Club Magazine "Cheval de Fer".

### Part 2

*Hungary appears to consist largely of flattish plains and it was across these we rode for the rest of the day. The weather was hot and sunny with temperatures into the 30's Centigrade or 80's Fahrenheit so half way through the afternoon I left our planned route and led the way down to the side of the River Danube. The road took us to a ferry crossing with a ferry of unusual design. The vehicle carrying part was of fairly standard appearance, very similar to the turntable ferry which operates between Glenelg and Kylehea on the Isle of Skye. However, attached to the side of this vessel, apparently by a large hinge, were the bows of a tug.*



*A vast articulated lorry carrying circus equipment came down the slipway to the ferry, prompting the thought that it was rather large for this small vessel. Undaunted, attempts were made to load it. Once the front wheels were on the ferry it lowered in the water somewhat, resulting in the back of the lorry grounding and the rear wheels being lifted. The*

*assorted ferry crew and lorry driver were still trying to sort the problem out as we left.*



*Ian had selected a hotel in Szentendre, just north of Budapest for the night. As we travelled through the town he suddenly turned left, stopped and announced we had reached the hotel (according to the satnav). Trouble was, we couldn't as such see a hotel. An enquiry in the nearby shop, however, revealed the hotel as immediately across the street! The hotel proved very comfortable with the air conditioning very welcome. The charger for my mobile phone was in the pannier containing Maggie's clothes. Looking for it in the car park, I made the interesting discovery that her Dior shower gel had leaked into the plastic bag containing her clothes. The only answer was to remove the clothes, take them to my room, wash as necessary, and return to the pannier when dry the following morning. The thoughts of the hotel staff about a motorcyclist who took ladies clothes to his room in the evening and returned them in the morning with no sign of a lady in sight were fortunately expressed in Hungarian, a language I cannot speak!*

### GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

*At last, a high quality meal was indicated by the hotel menu. I fancied a dish of meat and potatoes which came with salad. Being no fan of salad I asked if I could have vegetables instead. The waiter was not impressed but agreed to do as requested.*

Unfortunately, he substituted the potatoes for the vegetables, rather than the salad. The meal was still good, as I told the waiter when he enquired. His comment was that it would have been better still with the potatoes! After dinner we wandered round the town. At the first bar we were treated to the strains of "God Save the Queen". The England team were about to play in the World Cup which seemed to be projected on large screens outside several of the bars. The town proved delightful, a bit like Mont St Michel on a much smaller and more unspoilt scale.

### FLOODED RIVER

After its triumph the previous evening, the satnav was the natural choice for the crossing of Budapest.



Indeed it guided us well, taking in several streets from which the road surface had been removed, leaving manhole covers as random six inch high obstacles. Fortunately traffic was reasonably light and grew lighter still as we confidently entered the car park of a block of flats. Ian explained that the satnav was working well, but probably just a street or two out of adjustment. We made the airport and parked up just as my mobile phone rang with Maggie asking where we had parked. Ladies loaded, we headed for Romania. The plan was to take a ferry across the river Tisza but it was not to be. We could see the ferry well enough but it was difficult to reach, being moored about 100 yards out into the flooded river. Retracing our steps, we stopped for lunch at a wayside café, or two, to be more accurate. One café provided food whilst the

adjacent one provided drinks. It didn't seem to matter which we sat at. Maggie then complained about a deterioration in the local aroma, a problem quickly traced to the pig lorry which had just drawn up behind us. The overnight stop was in Gyula, only a couple of miles from the Romanian border. The hotel and town were pleasant enough but not quite so good as the previous night. Worse was to come.....

### NO RECOVERY SERVICE?

We reached the Romanian border about 9-30 the following morning. Already it was in the 30's centigrade and conditions in the hut where we went to buy insurance were stifling. Communication was not eased by a lack of English amongst the Romanians and a total lack of Romanian amongst the English! However, we parted with large sums of money in exchange for pieces of paper with lots of Romanian writing on them.



For all we knew, they could have been order forms for double glazing. Somehow, I feel certain that the insurance we had bought did not provide a recovery service back to the EEC, let alone back to the UK. Confidence in the quality of Ariel, Healey (and BMW) engineering was called for.

### OLD AND NEW BANKNOTES

We were pleasantly surprised by the condition of the first mile or so of road but deterioration quickly set in and speeds dropped to about 35mph. The road was the equivalent of our 'A' roads but changed to the equivalent of a 'B' once we had crossed the E671 trunk route which runs parallel to the border. By now the poverty of Romania was becoming apparent,

with tumbledown shacks and scrawny animals the roadside features. 'B' road conditions became steadily worse and speed dropped to 30mph. We stopped early for lunch at a small place called Ineu where Ian wandered up the street, found a cash machine and withdrew Romanian currency with no difficulty. The Romanian currency is the Lei which was revalued about 18 months previously by the simple expedient of dropping 4 noughts off the end. So, 1 new Lei was worth 10,000 old Lei. Of course, to add to our confusion, both old and new notes and coins were in widespread circulation.

### SWEATSHOPS

Close to the café where we ate was a building full of ladies using sewing machines in very high temperatures with very poor light. We had encountered one of the sweatshops where clothing sold on the British high street is made.

After lunch, the quality of our 'B' road deteriorated even further. Potholes abounded, as did areas which had been excavated for patching, perhaps 3 or 4 inches deep. Naturally, there were no cones or signs to indicate these holes so speed dropped yet again. Then we met the Romanian answer to highway maintenance. Having filled the patches, the process is to cover with that well known technique of tar and chip. Not a popular process in Britain but at least here we don't spray the tar then leave it while we have lunch before adding the chippings! In protest, the Healey oiled a plug on No 2. By 3-30pm we had reached the E79 trunk route where we thankfully filled with petrol and turned northwards for a few miles. Some serious highway maintenance was underway with replacement of the frequent culverts under the road. To keep the road open for traffic, half the width of the road was being done at a time. This meant that there was a totally unguarded and un-indicated excavation about 6 feet deep across half the road width. On one culvert they had obviously run short of replacement culvert units so had only placed one, about 2 feet wide, under each wheel track. The

other half of the road was completely without culvert so an element of care was needed to avoid descending 6 feet abruptly into the stream beneath. Half an hour or so of hairpins up and then down brought us to the road to our destination, aptly named Turda.



This was another 'A' class road, number 75, about 170km in length. It was quickly apparent that this road was in nowhere near as good condition as those we had covered previously. It consisted of potholes surrounded by previously filled potholes. The filled ones seemed to be in the minority. In addition, the road rose at a gradient of about 1 in 8 or steeper round interminable hairpins. I have every confidence that the views were superb and became even better as we ascended but I saw none of them, concentrating far harder on the road than was ever necessary in my previous experience. Speed dropped to 10 mph or maybe 15 mph on the good bits. Descending the far side we came across a petrol station so I decided to fill up. The forecourt was loose stone and the secondhand pump had two nozzles, one green with a green hose labelled Motorina and one black with a black hose labelled Bleifrei. Asking for the Bleifrei end the attendant got to within inches of the tank and said "Diesel?" "No, no, no" was my reply so he got the Motorina nozzle.

A couple of inches from the tank he said "Diesel?" so I had to stop him again. Our total lack of each other's language did not help. Eventually, I sniffed each nozzle in turn to find that the petrol came from the Bleifrei pump through the black hose and nozzle!

### PICOS DE EUROPA

We started again and in protest, the Healey oiled a plug on No 2.



By this time it was getting past 6pm and we were 100km from our destination so I warned the others we may well be sleeping that night in the open by the bikes. We set off again, shortly after which it started to rain with drops about the size of golf balls, to judge by the feel of them. Stopping to don waterproofs, we must have frightened the rain away because apart from occasional drops, it left us alone. We were now travelling down a limestone gorge similar to the superb scenery of the Picos de Europa in northern Spain. Again the road was so poor I was unable to see the views but what I did see was a narrow gauge railway running alongside and crossing the road from time to time. Clearly it was disused but all the infrastructure was there from stations to signals and of course the rails themselves. As a preservation project, it beats the narrow gauge railways of North Wales by a very large margin.



The telegraph pole marks the route of the narrow gauge railway.

Perhaps the railway had been used to transport materials for past repairs to the road because sections of concrete began to appear. Whilst many of the slabs had broken, they were at least good enough on one side of the road or the other for us to get back up to 25 or 30 mph. Incidentally, I can't remember seeing another vehicle on this road..... As we rounded a sharp bend at about 25 mph, without warning the concrete ended to be replaced by loose gravel. On the back of the bike, Maggie understood the need for the language I was forced to use. Fortunately both bikes remained upright. This particular problem was repeated several times but the real gem did have a warning sign. This was a crack down the centre of the road where the lower side had slipped away. I kept to the high side (which was the wrong side for Romanian traffic) as the low side dropped so that the difference in level went up to about 3 feet. At least we knew what constituted a road hazard in Romania !

**Part 3 will follow in the next issue**

### SECTION EVENTS CALENDAR

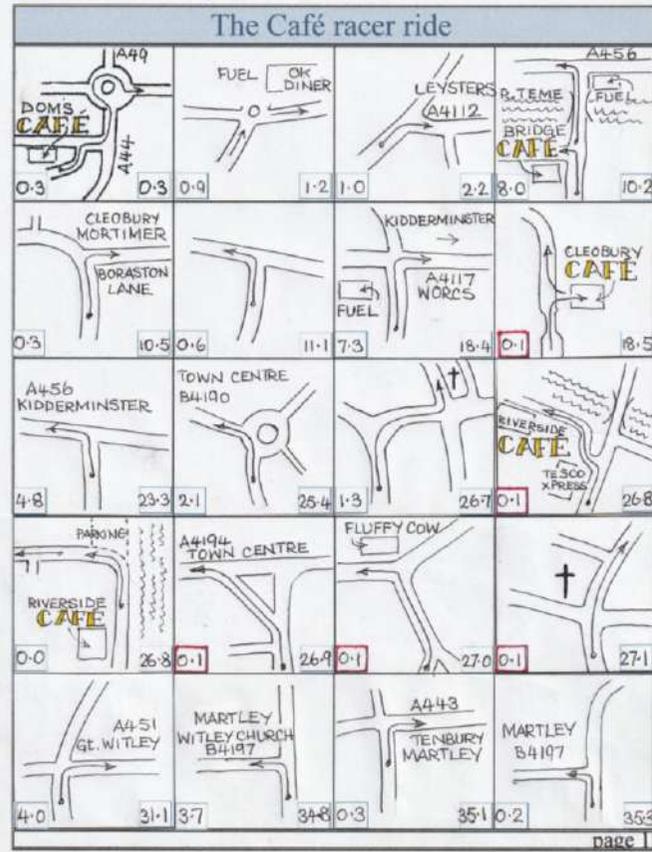
You will have received the latest updated section events calendar with this newsletter. COVID permitting, there is something to do almost every week of the year and often there are several events to choose from. We would love to see you take part

in these section events. Any machine over 25 years of age is welcome and it is not unusual to see bikes spanning 8 decades on section runs.

The new brunch and breakfast "ride-ins" have proved very popular. They don't require such a big time commitment, you can drop in, have a chat and a coffee then get on with the rest of your day. You are welcome to attend by car or modern motorbike, and you can choose your own route there and back.

There is now a huge choice of these ride-ins in all corners of our enlarged section.

For those who prefer the organised group rides, there are 22 planned for the year, including some where we are the invited guests of the Worcester and the North Birmingham sections.



Route sheets are always available for these rides and you are welcome to ride the route in your own time, or to follow a leader, as you prefer.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are in the fortunate position of having a number of section members who are willing and able to lead these rides, but we would love more of you to volunteer. You can contribute in any of the following ways.

**Checking out a "ride-in".** Duties include, liaising with the venue to check that it is open and happy to accept a bunch of old folks on old bikes – they usually are - and then passing on any important stuff to section members (via the Facebook page or the Newsletter)

**Leading a ride which already has an established route.** Duties would include riding the route a few days before and reporting any changes, so that the route sheet can be updated. On the day, the leader would be expected to welcome all those who are riding and brief newcomers on the protocols. You are not expected to fix people bikes!! If you have never done this before, help and assistance will be available from experienced leaders.

**Developing new rides.** It is vital that we keep the riding calendar fresh and that we continually find new places to ride and visit. If you plan a new route, you will be given all the help you need to develop it and produce the route sheets.

**A riding captain.** We need a volunteer to oversee and manage the riding part of the calendar. Duties would include finding and working with leaders, for all riding events, maintaining and improving the ride protocols, organising the calendar for future years. It would not mean you would have to ride every event!

If you would like to chat about volunteering just contact Geoff McGladdery on 07588 559698.

### GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK PAM

On Dec 24<sup>th</sup>, Pam Goodfellow will leave Allen House for the last time. The face, or more often the voice

of VMCC headquarters, Pam has been a fantastic servant to the club and has won the respect of many club members for her calm friendly and unruffled responses to all and every query.

I am sure you will all join me in thanking Pam for her service and wishing her all the best for the future.

*"After 15 wonderful years working at the VMCC I am handing over the reins to Sara. The only thing I can't pass on is 15 years knowledge, that's an impossible task.*

*I would like to thank you all for making my working life a pleasure, there are not many people who can say that and I know how lucky I have been. You are the club and without you I wouldn't have experienced such a good working relationship with many many people. I can't thank you enough.*

*Here's to the next chapter in my working life. I don't think anything will beat working for the VMCC but time will tell.*



Pam (on the right) in party mode with her sister Sue

Merry Christmas & A Very Happy 2021.

Pam Goodfellow"

Find us on 

Updates and other stuff can be found on our Facebook page – Feel free to add your views.

<https://www.facebook.com/VMCCHerefordshire>